

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-14 are pending. By the present amendment, claims 1-4 and 11-14 are canceled without prejudice; and claims 5-6, 8 and 10 are amended. No new matter has been added.

In the office action (page 2), the examiner rejects claims 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The applicants have subsequently canceled claims 13-14 without prejudice and therefore submit that the basis for this rejection has been removed. Accordingly, the examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

In the office action (page 4), the examiner rejects claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2003/0107771 (Shibata) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,807,388 (Kojima et al.) and further in view of U.S. Publication No. 2003/0154395 (Miura et al.).

The applicants respectfully disagree and submit that the claims, as they now stand, are in condition for allowance.

The examiner's attention is respectfully directed to all of the base claims that require (a) the output management system includes an information processing terminal and an output device and requires (b) that the server has a unit which stores the device identification information of the output device. Support for these claimed features can be found in the specification at page 21, line 26 to page 22, line 5.

As described above, the characteristic feature of the amended claims is that the output information database of the server stores the device identification information of the output device, in the system including the information processing terminal and the output device separately from each other. In order to appropriately protect confidential information in a system in which many users selectively and commonly use some output devices such as printers, it is important to check, not only which information processing terminal is used to instruct outputting the information, but also which output device (printer) is used to actually output the information. For example, if a certain one of the plural printers is frequently used to output confidential information illegally or without

authorization, the environment of the printer should be re-examined and the security should be improved. Thus, it is important to identify the output device used to output confidential information illegally or without authorization.


In the office action, all claims are rejected by the combination of the references. Particularly, the examiner indicated that the Miura reference teaches the database storing the device ID information (print PC203). However, based on the amended claims 5 to 10, the print PC 203 in the Miura reference corresponds to the claimed information processing terminal, and does not correspond to the claimed output device (printer). In other words, the Miura reference does not teach or suggest storing the information including the device ID information of the printing apparatus 106. None of the references proposes or considers storing the device ID information of the output device as required in the amended claims. Therefore, the person skilled in the art cannot reach the claimed invention from the teachings of the references, and the applicants believe that the presently claimed application is now in condition for allowance.

For the reasons set forth above, the applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-14, pending in this application, are in condition for allowance over the cited references. Accordingly, the applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and earnestly solicit an indication of allowable subject matter.

This response is considered to be responsive to all points raised in the office action. Should the examiner have any remaining questions or concerns, the examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone to expeditiously resolve such concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

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